

## Voices at AFOC

My name is Gabriela Peters. I was born in Mexico City and was brought to the United States at the age of five. I was able to begin school in the U.S. I learned with the kids from my community. It was when High School was almost over when I realized that life was getting harder. I learned that for an illegal person in the United States college education is more like a dream. I knew that with a college education I would have a better life. I investigated and found out that high school students were allowed to take college courses for free, so I enrolled myself at Los Angeles Trade Tech College while I was a senior in high school home studies. After I received my High School Diploma, I had already completed courses towards my major, Kinesiology. While attending LATTC, I was scouted to play tennis for Cerritos College and was able to complete my AA degree. Through all this, I had to work nights and weekends because I had already moved out from my parent's house. Not being able to work for what I studied caused me to leave my career behind and just settled for whatever job I could get.

Later in life, I got married. In 2011, my husband opened a bicycle shop in Lincoln Heights, named Lincoln Heights Cyclery. I helped him in every way I could. I thought about learning accounting, so I searched up the classes that AFOC provided and enrolled in the first accounting course. I felt like my life was back on track. I started strong, but, as I was advancing in the course, it became harder to learn, and I didn't have that much interest in it. I still kept attending AFOC, but later on talking it over with my husband and the accounting teacher, I realized that graphic design fit my personality better. I always loved art and working with computers comes easy to me. I was hooked. With a career in graphic design, our business will

grow. I can make our logos, designs for our clothing, decals for the bicycles, and sell novelty items plus much more. Our little bicycle shop became more successful.

Thanks to AFOC, I now work at a print shop in Los Angeles. I will continue to attend AFOC till I finish all the courses provided for a graphic designer. My goal is to learn as much as possible before I become my own boss and completely devote my time to our business. AFOC has provided a great foundation to my career and my future. My instructor, Mrs. Brodie, has helped me every step of the way. I am truly thankful, and I am the happiest person when I'm on my way to work. The dream that I thought would be impossible is now a reality.

